



Schooner Ernestina Commission Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Friday April 10, 2015

Meeting location: New Bedford National Historic Park

33 Williams Street

New Bedford, MA

Commissioners in Attendance, Laura Pires-Hester, Steve Walsh, Fred Sterner, Eugene Monteiro, Licy Do Canto and Karl Pastore

Also: Mary Anne McQuillan, Chuck Smiler & Rick Porteus

NHP Superintendent, Meghan Kish

Meeting called to order at 1:05PM

Chair: Welcome and thank everyone for attending today meeting.

Updates & Announcements:

Steve announced that Betsy Wall would be leaving MOTT as of this afternoon. Rich Doucette would be the new Executive Director of the Office of Travel and Tourism. Karl also shared that DCR Commissioner Murray is still in place and there's no new word on changes.

Minutes of Last Meeting:

Approval of 1/23/15 minutes: Motion by Fred, 2nd by Eugene, all voting in favor.

AGENDA ITEMS

National Park Survey:

Superintendent of the New Bedford Historic Park, Megan Kish would like the Commission to respond to a survey being done on the park by an outside consultant. Licy questioned as to how SEC can help and what were Park's ideas as to what it wanted to do. Meghan shared that there were many inhouse staff transitions, many new people with lack of experience here, so they are looking at Survey as to what responses Park Partners, including Ernestina, want, especially since NPS cannot use park monies.

Julius suggested that a program of what is happening during this period in Boothbay Harbor Shipyard would be helpful. Laura agreed, and that this time of "absence" would be important period in which we could jointly develop "products" (videos, materials etc) so that Ernestina-Morrissey is "out of sight" but not "out of mind." Laura will check as to whether she has completed the Survey for SEC; since it is a Monkey Survey, there's no way to copy others so Commissioners were requested to forward any suggestions to her.

Meeting with Mass Maritime Academy (Thursday, 10-11am 4/9/15):

Laura reported on the main points of discussion at this meeting; primary goal was to share mutual expectations at this point and establish .

- Good first meeting, with Admiral Rick Gurnon and Commandant Tom Bushy, SEC Commissioners Laura Pires-Hester and Fred Sterner, SEMA Officers Julius Britto and Mary Anne Mcquillan and Board Member _____ (former MMA graduate). (Licy and Karl had left messages that morning about their being unable to attend, but messages were not received before the meeting.)
- MMA is building port bay for Ernestina-Morrissey at a cost of 10 million, 7 million raised so far; the architectural plan was displayed.

- SEC and MMA would meet regularly during upcoming period of restoration; first meeting could be scheduled for right after July 4th holiday.
- A new President for the Academy is likely to be appointed by then, and it was agreed that it would be beneficial to have meeting of “transition”.
- Admiral Gurnon assured us that the Board is fully supportive of the plans to accept the restored Schooner.
- There was considerable discussion about the restoration items that are not in the restoration contract, eg, interior/navigational systems, rigging, etc.. These would need to be detailed as soon as appropriate; Julius noted that this would require additional fundraising.
- MMA’s initial plan/schedule for post-restoration period include ongoing maintenance for the vessel, use for training of cadets for the academic period, operating out of New Bedford for summers, also during the year with intensives for tuition-paying college students, in order to help defer annual maintenance costs.
- Laura, Julius, and Mary Anne emphasized that along with revenues concerns, we must ensure that public access, cultural programming (including Cape Verdean festivals, special programming, etc), and accessibility to a broad range of populations be included in the future life of the historic schooner.
- MMA officials confirmed that they understand and support the cultural and historical significance and value of the vessel and see also that this is a way to help diversify their own recruitment. They also acknowledged that demographic shifts mandated that understanding, and they had plans to travel around New England, “showing the flag” that would help do that.
- Laura shared that SEC had suggested a fundraising bus trip to Boothbay Harbor late August-early September, and we would continue to consider that. Commandant Bushy expressed interest in such an event.

- We agreed that there are many issues that will need honest and sometimes hard discussion and negotiations for this relationship to work for the future (including effort to get line item in State budget), and we look forward to an exciting “whole new history” for Ernestina-Morrissey.

Comments and questions were raised after Laura’s summary:

- Licy questioned what the deadline date for completion of the new port; that was unknown and will be followed up. He also shared concerns and questions as to how we can ensure MMA’s commitment to promote and share the diverse history of Ernestina-Morrissey; that SEC should ensure oversight and control over programming for the ship; and that public access must be maintained. Others shared similar concerns, and it was agreed that these need to be fleshed out. This was a first meeting and will not be the last.
- There was also concern that the meeting took place before the recommendations from the Work Group were discussed. Laura reminded the group that setting up the meeting with MMA had been decided at the last SEC meeting and the recommendations were being presented at today’s meeting.

Recommendations from Planning Work Group:

Licy gave an overview of the Planning Work Group recommendations and distributed copies to the Commission. Copy of the Report is attached.

New Business: It was agreed that Karl would ask Harold Burnham to attend the next SEC meeting in order to explain more fully the restoration plans, items to be done, and other considerations.

Meeting Schedule: May 8th 1-3PM; June 12th 1-3PM @ NBWHNP

Motion to Adjourn by Fred, 2nd by Licy. All voting in favor. Meeting closed at 3:25PM.

